



Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2022

Scripture: Psalm 103:1–6

Give Praise to the Lord.

Ken Blanchard, a well-known writer says in his book “The One Minute Manager” that leaders should develop the practice of “one-minute praising” when they catch their employees doing something right. We may only

be used to being caught doing something wrong.

Noticing someone doing something right is more difficult than it appears. Most of us are better at criticism than at praise. We are much better at “one-minute blaming” than “one-minute praising.”

One minute praising needs to be intentional and that is Blanchard’s point. Now this not only applies to our relationships but applies very much to our relationship with God. Many of us are better at complaining than praising.

If we read in the book of Numbers we hear a fine example of griping, complaining, moaning and groaning from the people of Israel. God rescued them from Egypt, parted the Red Sea so they could get across, providing manna and quail to eat, yet they said they missed the good food they had back in Egypt. In Egypt they were slaves, but they were willing to trade their freedom for a better menu. Sadly, all of us can be like them at some time or other.

I remember my mum saying – I’ll give you a good talking to!

I think sometimes we need to give ourselves a good talking to.

That's what Psalm 103 is all about. It's a prayer by David in which he talks to his own soul and reminds himself to "bless the Lord" and "not forget all his benefits."

I wonder how many of us could give God a "one-minute praising" for all His blessings?

I am sure we find it much easier to tell the Lord what we want Him to do for us. That's why we need to wash out that complaining spirit and replace it with a heart of gratitude to the Lord.

It is believed that David wrote this Psalm later in his life when he could look back and speak from experience about the tender mercies of the Lord.

We must think before we can thank; we must ponder before we can praise and must remember before we can rejoice.

**Let's break up each verse to see what David is telling us.**

**Verse 1 "Praise the Lord, my soul."** He repeats the command to praise God 6 times throughout this Psalm. The Hebrew word used here is "**barakh**" which means to bless. It means to bestow someone with special power or declaring the Lord to be the source of special power. In other words, praising the Lord for who He is.

**Verse 2 "Forget not God's benefits." First part of verse 3 "God forgives all your sins."**

The Hebrew word here is **go'el** which refers to a person who rescues another from a form of bondage through outside help. In early times it referred to situations ranging from physical harm to slavery and to debt.

God forgives all our sins. This is the best place to start because, when we sin, we usually feel guilt and our greatest need is to know that the Lord forgives us. Christ died for all our sins, and He has forgiven us if we believe in Him as our Saviour – sins – past, present and future.

### **Verse 3 second part – “God heals all your diseases.”**

The Hebrew word used here is **rachamin** which describes a deeply felt care and mercy. This is God as all healing is divine healing – it just comes in many different varieties. After doctors have done what they can do and we have used all the latest technology and taken the newest drugs, healing must come from the Lord. That is why we pray for the sick. They may be healed by medicine or by surgery or by some other course of treatment or they may find healing through a prayer or miracle from the Lord.

### **Verse 4 Part 1: “God redeems your life from the pit.”**

God rescues us from danger in our times of trouble. God has preserved you and I to this very moment, in our journey. We can only die one way and since all our days are written in God’s book and He alone knows how our earthly journey will end, we don’t have to live in fear of the future. We all will die someday so to me, this means we ought to live life with no care for how or when we are going to die. God’s angels encamp around us to deliver us from trouble.

How do you reply when someone asks you: “how was your day?” Do you go into detail or just respond with: “Oh, nothing happened.”

But we need to think of what didn’t happen – you weren’t beaten up, no-one rear-ended your car; no-one scammed you; your

identify wasn't stolen; your partner still loves you; you have your health; you're not dead yet!

Think of all the bad things that could have happened to you today that didn't and give praise to God for keeping you safe.

**Verse 4 Part 2: "God crowns you with love and compassion."**

The crown reminds us of our position as the children of God. It is the loyal, unending, unchanging love of God towards us as He heaps His blessings upon us – literally pours them over us. Then He crowns us with His tender mercies. Tender mercy means He knows what we are going through, and He meets us where we are.

**Verse 5: God satisfies your desires, renews you like the eagle."**

God satisfies us with good. That means there is nothing on earth that can satisfy us deeply except God Himself. You may remember having a lovely meal, you got two helpings and were really satisfied afterwards. But, maybe the next day that satisfaction had worn off.

David is speaking here of satisfaction deeper than anything the world can offer. God says: I will give you whatever you need so you can soar like eagles. The eagle is symbolic of strength and speed, perhaps because of its ability to attack quickly from above.

**Verse 6: The Lord works righteousness and justice for all**

Because of God's character and His loving nature, David focuses on His mercy and care. God sustains us, not because of our efforts at obedience but because of His love.

Let's go back to the beginning of this sermon – let's do some one-minute praising this week.

Catch out your partner doing something right.

Catch out your children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews doing something right.

Catch your friends doing something right.

Catch your colleagues doing something right.

Maybe even catch your Pastor doing something right.

When you do, give them a one-minute praising.

That alone will do your soul good. Have you ever noticed that focusing on the positive lifts your spirits.

In today's society we read and see so much information about how to renew yourself, how to restore your energy, how to change your outlook and how to change your attitude.

I know of a much better "miracle cure." Better than aerobics, cheaper than health food, quicker than dieting and less strenuous than jogging.

Fill your life with God's good gifts to you.

If you will let Him, the Lord will give you something the world cannot match. The result will be immortal youth.

God intends to give us contentment, satisfaction, strength and vigour.

**My challenge for all this week, is for each of us to start praising God for one full minute, without stopping, every day for this week. And at the beginning of next Sunday's service, be willing to share how it has strengthened your heart and brought you closer to God.**